

ARFORGEN: Means to an Operational Reserve

by

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

ARFORGEN: MEANS TO AN OPERATIONAL RESERVE

by

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ABSTRACT

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ARFORGEN: MEANS TO AN OPERATIONAL RESERVE

The Nation has been at a state of national emergency for nine and a half years. As a result, the Army has had continuous access to the reserve component through partial mobilization. The Army National Guard and Army Reserve have performed magnificently, and the relationship between the components is better than it has ever been. Our Soldiers have fought together and bled together, and more than ever, we are one Army, a Total Force. Our Nation cannot lose the enormous gains we have made

—2011 Army Posture Statement¹

In FY12 the Army officially transformed from a demand-based Army Force Generation model to that of a supply-based Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model. As a critical component of the Total Army, the U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) has adopted a supply-based Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model as a means to provide a responsive and unique force comprised of Citizen-Soldiers to meet the security requirements of combatant commanders. But the transition of the USAR to an enduring operational force with ARFORGEN is not yet complete. Fully implementing ARFORGEN in the USAR requires feasible and acceptable solutions for providing sufficient resources, employer support, manning policies, and other programs tailored to USAR requirements. Legislation must optimize utilizing reserve units in the “available” year.² Most of all, reserve Soldiers and their families must buy-into the process. This paper examines if the ARFORGEN model is feasible and acceptable when used as a tool for implementing an enduring Operational Reserve. It explains the transition to a supply-based process and the necessary procedural, cultural, fiscal, and policy implications of ARFORGEN for the USAR and provides recommendations to implement, change, or drop the ARFORGEN model.

Background

To meet the operational demands of the past ten years, the U.S. Army Reserve has evolved from a culture of a strategic reserve to that of an operational reserve. “One thing is for certain across every echelon of this Army; we cannot relegate the Army National Guard and Army Reserve back to a strategic reserve. The security of the nation can ill afford a reserve force that is under-manned, under-equipped or at insufficient levels of training and readiness.”³ The 2011 Army Posture Statement clearly describes the need for an enduring operational reserve to meet future national security challenges in an era of persistent conflict and a period of constrained resources. However, as the budget crunch looms, some analysts are claiming that a strategic reserve may be an option for reducing the defense budget. However, although an operational reserve is more expensive than a strategic one, an operational reserve can save defense dollars by meeting requirements that otherwise would be provided by the active component. This analysis will consider this value added by maintaining a robust operational reserve.

Strategic Reserve

A definition of the strategic reserve and a review of lessons learned from recent mobilizations are critical to understanding why ARFORGEN and an operational reserve are important to the Army. Prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks the Army Reserve was viewed as a strategic reserve. For the purposes of this paper, a strategic reserve is defined as a force that maintains readiness by means of a tiered system, based on projected future demands. Funds were allocated to Army Reserve units for training, manning, and equipping based on when they would be required for mobilization in the event of an emerging contingency. Units in the lower tiers were often fiscally neglected;

they were regarded as potential donors of personnel and equipment to units in the upper tiers. Units with greater budgets had the resources to offer Soldiers additional training; they were generally better equipped and manned.

In a strategic reserve, the typical Army Reserve Soldier would participate in battle assemblies one weekend per month and in 14 days (not necessarily congruent) of annual training. Units in the higher tiers with larger budgets could fund Soldiers for as many as 29 days of annual training. In addition to annual training, Reserve Soldiers could be offered extended schooling paid for with Active Duty for Training (ADT) funding. Yet another resource for units in the upper echelons was Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW) funding, which could be used for projects deemed to enhance readiness. Soldiers in the units with smaller budgets were provided funds only for the statutory annual 24 days of battle assemblies and 14 days of annual training.

Proponents of a return to a strategic reserve cite the success of the Army Reserve during the mobilization that occurred in the months following the 9/11 attacks. However, proponents of this option are overlooking the disruption and turbulence caused by the transition of a strategic force to one mobilized for extended contingency operations. This turmoil impacted the entire force; from the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) down to individual reserve Soldiers.

The extent to which this tiered system was flawed became immediately evident as the USARC began the process of alerting units for mobilization. At home stations, and at the mobilization stations across the country that provided Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP), deployability issues of Soldiers and consequently of units soon emerged. But Army leaders did not quickly identify deficiencies across all tiers and

within both components of the reserve force. Medical and dental issues were contributing to non-deployability rates approaching 30 percent.⁴ Regardless of tier, the number of non-participants or “Ghost Soldiers” (Soldiers assigned in a reserve status but not participating in accord with statutory requirements) added to the false perception of manning readiness. Duty Military Occupational Skills Qualification (DMOSQ) percentages were low due to an assignment process in which Soldiers were assigned to units based on proximity to their home, rather than to units for which they were qualified.

Army leaders relied on unrealistic assumptions as they set mobilization timelines for units in the upper tiers. They assumed that units in the upper tiers would require less time to prepare for deployment at the mobilization stations. In reality, National Guard and Army Reserve units needed more than 90 days of post-mobilization preparation to become deployable. Given their one-year Boots on the Ground (BOG) requirement, the total length of mobilization for Reserve Soldiers extended from fifteen to eighteen months. Most of the delays in the post-mobilization phase were caused by Reserve leaders’ lack of an operational mindset regarding manning and ineffective allocation of resources in the tiered readiness model.

Operational Reserve

Relying on the Overseas Contingency Operational budget, the Army has addressed many of these mobilization issues for current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. TRICARE medical programs have been implemented to improve Reserve Soldiers’ medical and dental readiness prior to mobilization. Additionally, training funds are now allocated to units according to when they are scheduled to deploy which has replaced the former tiered methodology. Targeting funding to where it is actually needed ultimately creates budget efficiencies. However, fully manning the Army Reserve

remains an issue due to the extensive cross-leveling of personnel required to meet the combatant commanders' Requests for Forces (RFF). Reserve Soldiers remain in demand for on-going contingencies in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as for other worldwide employments. In our current demand-driven system, certain types of units are deploying more frequently than others. Current demands further exacerbate manning challenges. Reserve Soldiers, their families and employers still have no predictable deployment model.

Soon after assuming the duties of the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) in 2007, General Casey reported the total force was unbalanced with regard to BOG: Dwell ratios. To fulfill requirements in Iraq and Afghanistan the active component was spinning at a 1:1 BOG: Dwell ratio, while the reserve components were at 1:2 for those units in high demand⁵. General Casey then set goals to achieve balance and preserve the All Volunteer Force for the future. His vision for ARFORGEN was based on anticipated reductions in force levels in Iraq and potentially in Afghanistan. As the manpower dividends from these force reductions in theater were becoming realized, General Casey initiated the move from a demand-driven process to that of a supply-based process.

Realizing that the transition to a supply-based model would require several years, General Casey proposed transitioning to a sustainable process by 2015. His goal was to move dwell periods for the active component from 18 months in FY10 to 27 months in 2015. Beginning 1 January 2012, the Army moved from a 12-month BOG to a 9-month BOG for both the active component and the reserve component. This would create a 1:3 BOG: Dwell for the active component. The reserve component would

achieve a 1:4 mobilization (MOB): Dwell by FY15.⁶ To reach these goals, the deployed force structure would need to be reduced from the FY10 numbers (2 Corps, 5 divisions, 26 Brigade Combat Teams and 117K enablers) to proposed FY12 numbers (1 Corps, 5 Divisions, 20 Brigade Combat Teams and 90K enablers). Significantly, of the 90K enablers, 46K will be provided by the reserve component, with 24.6K of these coming from the USAR.⁷ General Casey's vision was a 1/5/20/90 mission force available for employment or deployment annually. Any forces above these numbers would be deemed a "surge force" that would come from the following year's mission force.⁸

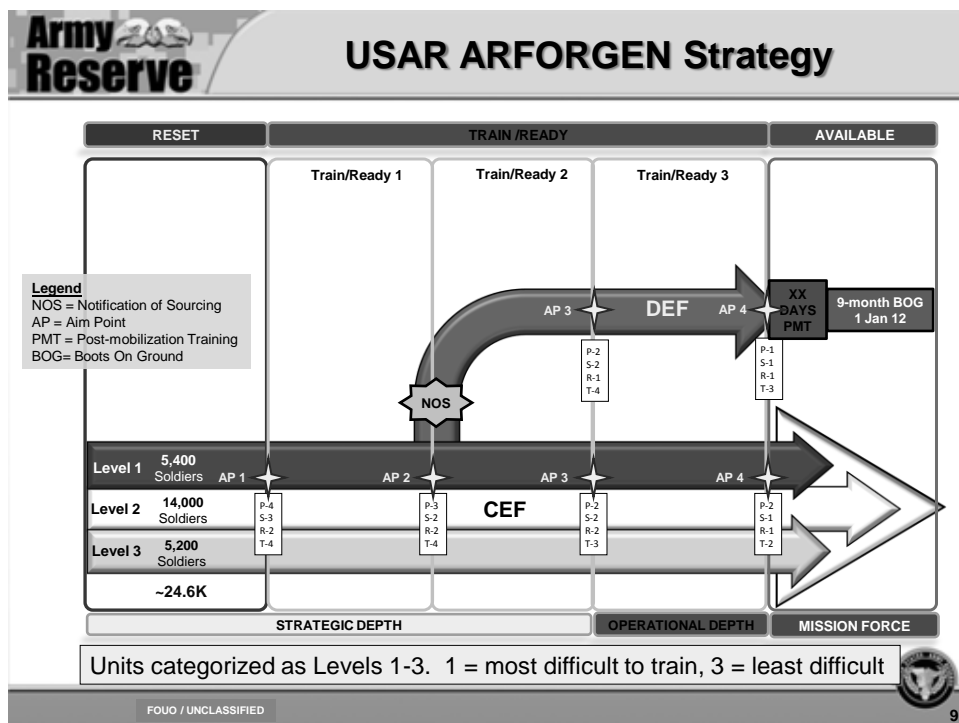


Figure 1:

Defining ARFORGEN for the USAR

To address manning, training, and equipping issues in a long-term Strategy, the Army Reserve has adapted the active component's Army Force Generation

(ARFORGEN) model for the US Army Reserve. A supply-based ARFORGEN model, gives the Army a way to use an operational reserve in current conflicts and in a post-war environment. The Army Reserve's version of the ARFORGEN model provides a 5-year cyclical employment plan for reserve units. In the first year, a unit resets. It then enters a three-year training cycle that assures progressive readiness and focuses on a projected mission. In the fifth year, the unit deploys in support of Combatant Commanders (CCDR) for contingency operations or for other missions, such as Theater Security Cooperation (TSC), Army and Joint Exercises, Homeland Defense (HD), Defense support to Civil Authorities (DSCA), and other requirements both CONUS and OCONUS. The type and duration of these missions is set early in the training cycle (the Army goal is identification of mission and duration within 24 months into the 5-year cycle). This early notification provides Soldiers, their families and employers with the predictability required to properly plan for the employment or deployment of Soldiers in their units' fifth year as part of the mission force.

Planning for a 1:4 MOB:Dwell or a 5-year cyclical model requires distribution of the desired capabilities equitably over the cycle to ensure like capabilities for each mission force. The current operational force structure has not yet been fully integrated into a five-year cycle. The final solution will likely be a compromise that produces somewhat different capabilities within the mission forces over time. The USAR currently has approximately 125K Soldiers in its rotational operational force structure; the remaining force structure is comprised of the generating force, Trainees, Transients, Holdees, Students (TTHS), and non-rotational but available forces. The USAR can provide 25K enablers each year as part of the rotational operating force required for the

Army's 90K enabler mission force. The balance would be provided by the Army National Guard and the active component.⁹

In coordination with Forces Command (FORSCOM), the USARC staff conducted an analysis of the required capabilities. As a result of this analysis, for FY12 the 24.6K of enablers provided by the USAR break down into the following categories: Civil Affairs, 2.3K; Engineer, 4.6K; Medical, 2.7K; Military Police, 2.5K; Transportation, 4.2K; Combat Service Support, 6.2K; Signal Corps, .5K; Other, 1.6K.¹⁰ These required capabilities will change as theater requirements evolve. Balancing the current force structure against these future requirements will remain a challenge for Army planners. ARFORGEN provides a practicable context for planners and force managers.

Reset generates the initial ARFORGEN Force Pool, which begins with a unit's return date. This return date is established when 51 percent of the unit's personnel have returned to their demobilization station.¹¹ Units that have not deployed are assigned a reset date. Reset activities include: Soldier-readiness reintegration; professional military education (PME); limited individual, team and crew training tasks; receipt of new personnel and equipment; and other reconstitution related tasks, as directed. RC units are directed to maximize PME during reset.¹² Additional tasks for reserve Soldiers include reintegration with employers and follow-up medical appointments to resolve medical issues through the Veterans Administration for those Soldiers not retained on active duty.

For the reserve component, the next force pool in ARFORGEN after reset is Train/Ready 1(TR1). TR1 begins 12 months after a unit enters the reset pool and ends at the 24-month point in the 5-year cycle. Activities conducted during this period consist

of individual, crew, squad and team training, Duty Military Occupational Skills Qualification (DMOSQ) training, functional training, mission command staff training, PME, and reception of new personnel and equipment.¹³ Commanders must ensure the medical and dental processing and readiness of all assigned Soldiers.¹⁴ Reserve component commanders are challenged by medical issues because some of their Soldiers do not have medical benefits associated with their civilian jobs. Army leaders must address this issue.

DEF and CEF

Before considering to the next force pool, Train/Ready 2 (T/R2), it is important to distinguish between Deployment Expeditionary Forces (DEF) and Contingency Expeditionary Forces (CEF). At this transition point in the cycle, units are designated as either DEF or CEF. These designations enable the active Army and Army Reserve to source specific units for planned and predictable future missions. This designation provides training, manning, and equipping focus for units and provides needed predictability for Soldiers, their families and employers.

DEF forces are “Army general purpose force units assigned or allocated during the ARFORGEN synchronization process that has the responsibility to execute assigned operational missions. The DEF units are given a Latest Arrival Date (LAD) in order to execute assigned missions.”¹⁵ CEF forces are “Army general purpose force units designated during the ARFORGEN synchronization process and given an available force pool date in order to execute a contingency mission, operational plan, or other Army requirement.” An example of a reserve component CEF unit is a unit which receives an Available Force Pool Date (AFPD) at Reset (R)+ 180 days in support of a

theater security cooperation mission.”¹⁶ CEF units may be re-designated as DEF during any point in the Train/Ready years to meet requirements for an emerging contingency.

DEF and CEF forces are considered to be either mission or surge forces depending on where they are in the cycle. Mission forces are units (CEF or DEF) in the Available Force Pool. They can meet the needs of a specific named or numbered operational requirement or operational plan. They are not part of a single large organization that deploys at the same time. Surge forces consist of units in the Train/Ready Force Pool that are assigned to respond to emerging requirements or contingency missions. For example, a designated CEF unit in the Train/Ready Force Pool may respond to a peace operation, while another designated CEF unit in the Train/Ready Force Pool may respond to a Homeland Defense contingency mission.¹⁷

Because the CEF units are potential resources for emerging contingencies as part of the surge force, the USAR asserts they need to maintain a higher level of training readiness than do DEF forces as they approach the available year. DEF forces have a LAD and a post mobilization training plan that prepares them for their assigned mission. CEF units re-tasked as part of a surge force may have less time to prepare to meet an emerging requirement than a unit designated as DEF earlier in the cycle. The USAR should be allocated more resources for CEF units in the ARFORGEN cycle, to enable them to surge at a higher readiness level.

USAR DEF Strategy

The training strategy for DEF units pushes the training required for deployment to post-mobilization. At the September 2010 ARFORGEN Policy Synchronization Drill (APSD), General Casey directed that the USAR develop a DEF training strategy that allows the Soldiers to spend more time at home and less time away from employers in

the year prior to deployment.¹⁸ His direction prompted the development of two different strategies for each force pool. Since DEF units have a LAD and a training focus the DEF training strategy differs from the CEF training strategy that designates when the training will occur, what additional resources are required, and as well requires the CEF to train for Full Spectrum Operations (FSO).

LAD criteria for DEF and CEF are not as clear for the reserve component as for the active component. Because of the time required to mobilize the reserve component, some reserve units should be designated for DEF only because this designation provides better access to units required on short notice. This does incur a cost because some units may need to be on mobilization orders in order to respond quickly when needed. Examples of these types of missions are Homeland Defense, Chemical, Biological, Radiation, Nuclear or Explosive and Defense Support of Civil Authorities. There is some level of risk which must be considered when making budgeting decision regarding DEF and CEF designation for the reserve components. Also, this designation impacts Soldiers, their families and employers.

USAR CEF Strategy

The USAR CEF strategy divides its 24.6k available forces in each force pool into three levels. Units are assigned to a given level based on their capability to achieve training level two (T2) before entering the available force pool as the mission force. Level 1 units require more training than level 2 units to achieve a T2 readiness level. Level 1 units are comprised of brigade and higher headquarters along with other more specialized units such as signal battalions, medical units, Civil Affairs, and aviation. These units require an additional six days of annual training in T/R2 and T/R3 to achieve a T2 readiness level. These additional training days allows them to participate

in a 21-day exercise in both of these training years. Approximately 5400 Soldiers are assigned to the units in level 1. Level 2 is comprised of units that require fewer resources than level 1 units. Level 2 units require only six additional days of training in T/R3 to achieve T2 prior to entering the available force pool. Most units assigned to level 2 are battalion and company-size organizations. Some 14,000 Soldiers are assigned to these units. Level 3 units require the least amount of resources to achieve T2 prior to entering the available force pool. These units are typically smaller than companies and can achieve T2 by conducting all train during statutory annual training and battle assemblies. Some 5200 Soldiers are assigned to units in level 3.¹⁹

The estimated annual funding required to achieve the desired readiness levels for CEF units is 250 million dollars.²⁰ This estimate covers the additional training man-days, but not the operational costs of employment in the available year. At this time, this funding issue has not been resolved.

Aim Points

The Army has developed Aim Points as a means to measure the progression of units through the ARFORGEN Cycle. The Aim Points provide goals for unit commanders to achieve and are similar to metrics used in Unit Status Reporting criteria: personnel (P), equipment on hand(S), maintenance readiness(R), and training (T). The USAR has established four Aim Points at the transition points between force pools, beginning at the end of the reset force pool or the beginning of T/R1. At Aim Point 2 (the beginning of T/R2) units are designated as either CEF or DEF. The DEF units are tracked at different readiness levels than are CEF units. The most significant difference in the readiness levels are the T-rating goals. CEF's goal is to achieve T2 upon entry into the available force pool, while the DEF goal for the same Aim Point is achievement

of T3.²¹ This difference exists because DEF units receive post mobilization training as outlined in the strategy discussion, but CEF units do not receive post-mobilization training.

Train/Ready 2-Available Force Pool Date

For the reserve component, the force pool in ARFORGEN after T/R1 is Train/Ready 2(T/R2). T/R2 begins 24 months after a unit begins the reset pool; it ends at the 36-month point in the 5-year cycle. Activities conducted during this period consist of training proficiency at the platoon level; likewise, battalion and brigade level staffs train at the practice level of proficiency. Other tasks include sustained individual training, functional exercises, mission command staff training, Pre Command Courses (PCC), Professional Military Education (PME), and acquisition of at least 70% of assigned equipment.²² Commanders continue to monitor the medical and dental processing and readiness of all Soldiers assigned.²³ The resulting Aim Point goals for the end of T/R2 differ for DEF and CEF. The significance of this difference is the training readiness rating of T3 for CEF force vice T4 for units in the DEF force pool. The Personnel readiness goals at this Aim Point are P2 for DEF and P3 for the CEF. T/R 2 is the first year which level 1 units require the additional 6 days of funding which must be reflected their annual training budgets.

For the reserve component the next force pool in ARFORGEN after T/R2 is Train/Ready 3(T/R3). T/R3 begins 36 months after a unit begins the reset pool and ends at the 48-month point in the 5-year cycle. This is the units' final training and readiness cycle before entering the available force pool. Units in the CEF force pool during this period achieve training proficiency at the company level (Trained); likewise, battalion and brigade level staffs at the trained level of proficiency. Other tasks include

Sustained individual training, functional exercise, continued mission command staff training, Warrior Exercises, and the Collective Skills Training Exercise (CSTX) for level 1 units. Level 2 units participate in a Warrior Exercise. Equipment on-hand meets 80% of readiness requirements.²⁴ Commanders continue to monitor the medical and dental processing and readiness of all Soldiers assigned.²⁵ The Aim Point goals for the end of T/R3 are T3 for DEF and T2 for CEF force pool. The Personnel readiness goals at Aim Point 4 are P1 for DEF and P2 for the CEF. Both level-1 and level-2 units require an additional 6 days of annual training during this phase. These 12 days must be appropriately funded.

After achieving the readiness goals at Aim Point 4, units move into the available force pool as the designated mission force. DEF units will attend a 60-day post-mobilization training regimen conducted by First Army at one of the enduring mobilization stations. They will then meet their LAD and complete a 9-month BOG for their operational contingency mission. This is followed by a 30-day demobilization and leave period. The Army's goal for DEF forces is to move from a 400-day mobilization order to a 365-day mobilization order.

CEF Mission Sets Capabilities

CEF forces will conduct their pre-planned mission in the available year. The duration of these missions is subject to available funding and any changes in authorities or laws which currently limit the employment of the CEF to the duration of annual training. The vision for future CEF missions involve providing meaningful and predictable support to combatant commanders worldwide, support to civil authorities, and support for Army and Joint exercises.

The Reserve Component is well suited for use as a source of strategic depth as well as in a wide variety of operational roles, including providing: (1) rotating operational units deployed in response to Combatant Commander needs and Service requirements; (2) units and teams deployed in support of CCDR Theater Security Cooperation and Building Partner Capacity activities around the globe; (3) individual augmentees who can be deployed in response to CCDR, Defense agency, or Service needs; (4) units teams and individuals to support core Unified Command Plan missions such as HD and DSCA.²⁶

CEF forces of the USAR are particularly well suited to conduct a wide array of mission sets enabled by citizen Soldiers who bring to bear not only military skill sets but those learned in the course of their civilian training and experience. Combined with the fact that there are many specialties and military skills resident primarily or only in the Army Reserve make the USAR a vital asset to the total Army. Combatant commanders seeking Theater Security Cooperation assets with skills in medical, engineer, transportation, cyber, and institutional training can request these assets from the Army Reserve through Forces Command to Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA). Other viable missions for CEF units during the available year include supporting joint and Army exercises both CONUS and OCONUS, Over Seas Deployment Training (ODT), and Opposing Forces (OPFOR) support to the Army's Combat Training Centers (CTCs).²⁷

Transition to a Supply-Based Model

In order to transition from a traditional strategic reserve to an operational reserve which deploys using the ARFORGEN model, the USARC must balance demand-based requirements, driven by combatant commanders, to a supply based system driven by available forces. Determination of deployment timelines and sourcing is currently based on a process using Army Reserve Expeditionary Force (AREF) pools which lump units into packages without an actual date for mobilization and follow-on deployment.

Because of heavy demand, deployments have not adhered to the desired BOG: Dwell ratios for certain high demand units. This interim AREF process focuses primarily on units deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan or the Deployment Expeditionary Force (DEF). It continues to rely on extensive cross-leveling from Contingency Expeditionary Forces (CEF) not scheduled for deployment. Manning of the DEF forces in this process has been uncertain because of on-going demands from in-theater Joint Manning Documents (JMD) to include headquarters and transition teams²⁸.

An essential element in this transitional period is to be able to provide units with an Available Force Pool Date (AFPD). By design, the ARFORGEN model will provide units returning from deployment or CEF missions to the reset force pool with their next AFPD. The ARFORGEN Synchronization Tool (AST) is the program currently being developed to manage AFPDs and sourcing. The program will provide an ARFORGEN Common Operating Picture, create AFPDs, and provide an automated feed, verses a manual feed, system for ARFORGEN package information²⁹. Creating this system requires the merging of other, currently used data based systems including AREF, Structure and Manpower Allocation System (SAMAS), and Mobilization and Deployment Information System. Additionally, there is the requirement to manually feed information to complete the merger and stand up AST. This data base will be available at the battalion level in both classified and unclassified formats.³⁰ The completion of this data base merger and the utilization of AST is a critical component in the development of ARFORGEN as a viable tool for enabling an operational reserve for the future.

Overcoming Constraints

A successful USAR ARFORGEN model must overcome constraints in access, employer and Family support, manning, and funding. Access to units identified as DEF

force pool units to meet an emerging threat, respond to HD or DSCA events, or a planned rotation to a contingency operation is not an issue as many leaders believe. Under existing law, notification can be waived by the Secretary of Defense in the event that immediate access to the reserve component is required to respond to a national emergency. This waiver must be submitted to Congress.

DoD access to reserve component units and personnel for events that occur with little or no notice is limited by the provisions of DoD instructions 1235.12, which sets Secretary of Defense minimum notification guidelines as 30 days for emergent force requirements and 180 days for rotational force requirements. In those cases where no-notice access to reserve component personnel is justified, the Department should be prepared to use existing procedures to approve an exception to notification policy to enable rapid employment of pre-planned and pre-identified Reserve Component units and personnel.³¹

Access to CEF units to meet requirements not associated with a named contingency presents a challenge. Presidential Proclamation 7463 is currently in place and is renewed annually to ensure access to the Reserve Component to meet threats, at home and abroad related to terrorism.³² While it is feasible to meet operational reserve goals with ARFORGEN under the current statutory limits, it is less acceptable to senior leaders in the USAR. USAR units cannot efficiently conduct TSC missions within the current annual training timeline constraints. The cost of rotating units overseas in support of combatant commander's TSC or joint exercise missions under annual training guidelines creates unnecessary turmoil and expenses for Soldiers, the USAR, and for the gaining commands.

The 2011 "Comprehensive Review of the Future Role of the Reserve Component" report recommended revising Title 10, U.S. Code, 12304 to:

enable responsive access to, and mobilization of, the Reserve Component to support force requirements in response to the National Security Strategy to include such activities as Theater Security Cooperation,

Building Partner Capacity, and training and exercises. Authority to mobilize the Reserve Component would remain with the President, but could be delegated to cognizant officials within the Department of Defense via Executive Order.³³

Additionally, DoD proposes an authorization/change that would allow/authorize the Secretary of Defense the ability to involuntarily mobilize reserve component individuals and units totaling 50,000 Soldiers for up to 270 days.³⁴

Predictability is essential for the ARFORGEN model and the operational reserve concept to become an enduring reality. In order for this strategy to be successful employers, Soldiers, and families must buy-in to the process.

Employer support for units and Soldiers being employed as part of the CEF force pool is another challenge which needs to be further studied. The USAR Vision and Strategy Statement states: “The Army Reserve has determined that civilian employers will support emergency and predictable absences of Army Reserve Soldiers from the workplace”.³⁵ The extent to which rigor was applied in making this determination should be further explored. The study should ensure a censusing of a variety of employers from large private sector organizations, small business owners, local, state and federal government organizations.

Private sector companies with large workforces may be more likely to support a Soldier’s absence for predictable CEF missions not associated with a named contingency. Small business employers who will be impacted to a greater degree by the Soldier’s absence may be less inclined to support such employment without the weight of the law in support of the Soldier. In addition to statutory changes, there should be incentives and benefits offered to employers to assist in countering the loss of productivity from the RC service member. These incentives could be in the form of tax

breaks, education and training assistance for employees, and recognition of their support to the nation.

Integral to Retaining an All-Volunteer force in the reserve component is the Army's ability to retain the Army families from which these Soldiers draw their support. The USAR and the Army have taken steps to ensure programs available to active component families living on or near installations are also available to reserve component families whom are generally more geographically dispersed and often far from supporting installations. The Army must fight to retain these programs and initiatives.

Many of the challenges facing the Army Reserve as it transitions to a supply-based system in an operational reserve involve the process of manning units. The extensive cross leveling, filling Worldwide Individual Augmentee vacancies, voluntary mobilizations, and medical readiness are all issues that require solutions to improve the manning for ARFORGEN. As the war in Iraq concludes and as the peace dividend is realized in the form of decreased demand for mobilized Soldiers, addressing these issues in a manner that is both feasible and acceptable will become more attainable. The first step is to continue to communicate the vision and strategy for implementing an operational reserve. Commanders at all levels must be on board with the operational reserve concept and eliminate the mindset of the strategic reserve when dealing with unfit, non-participants, and non-performing Soldiers in the ranks.

The USARC G1 must continue to revise its assignments process to one that is based more on the needs of the Army Reserve and less on distance. A new Army Reserve Soldier or one that is new to an area should be placed into a unit closest to

home where there is a requirement for that Soldiers qualifications and skill sets. As an example: a Military Police DMOSQ qualified Soldier should not be assigned to an engineer company seven miles from his residence when there is a requirement in a Military Police unit thirty miles from his residence. There should be a system, (perhaps regional), and led by USARC in which units come together and scrub rosters to adjudicate such mismatches in the assignment process.³⁶ This could be a recurring process to ensure an early calibration, and will require continuous over site until a centrally managed system can be emplaced.

As with the potential changes to policy and legislation for access, funding is required for the additional training days for level 1 and level 2 units. Changing policy and legislation to enable rapid access to Reserve Component Soldiers and units is a pointless drill if the units are not trained to accomplish the mission in short order. The 250 million dollar price tag for the operational reserve can be offset by reduced active component structure. Utilizing the reserve component is more cost efficient than the active component when applied at intermediate levels."³⁷ Another funding option may include redistribution of Army Reserve Component funds based on projected missions for the USAR and ARNG projected by FORSCOM and U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM).

Conclusion

This paper examined the feasibility and acceptability of the supply-based ARFORGEN model as a means to provide a responsive and unique force to meet the security requirements of combatant commanders and provide an enduring Operational Reserve for the nation. In order for ARFORGEN to remain a feasible tool for the total force our nation's senior leaders must invest in the reserve component by providing

access for periods greater than 29-days of annual training. To achieve this, the required legislation and funding must be approved and apportioned. The Army Reserve needs to address its manning challenges to ensure the ranks of USAR units are manned with trained Soldiers ready to execute as a mission force in the available year or as a surge force when needed for emerging contingencies.

Determining the acceptability of the ARFORGEN construct should entail comprehensive studies focusing on employer, Family and Soldier support of the model. Employers may find incentives for supporting their Citizen-Soldiers and their country an attractive option. Family programs need to be extended to include reserve component Families. Soldiers must support employment/deployment as the ARFORGEN construct directs. Army leadership must continue to support these Citizen-Soldiers and acknowledge their value once ongoing contingencies conclude.

Endnotes

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- ²⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Force Generation*, 3.
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- ²⁹ Ibid., 30.

³⁰ Ibid., 28.

³¹ Office of the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, “*Comprehensive Review of the Future Role of the Reserve Component*”, 70.

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³³ Ibid., 100.

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³⁵ Ibid., 24.

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